

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**Claim 1 (Currently amended)** A vehicle component comprising a ~~biodegradable material, said biodegradable material formed as~~ at least one of a fiber, a continuous matrix of a composite, a filler, or a cellular material, the fiber, the continuous matrix, the filler, or the ~~cell~~ cellular material consisting essentially of a polyhydroxyalkanoate resin, the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin being a homo-polymer or copolymer of hydroxyalkanoate monomer units selected from the group consisting of 3- hydroxybutyrate, 3-hydroxyvalerate, 3-hydroxyoctanoate, 4-hydroxybutyrate, 5 5-hydroxyvalerate, 5-hydroxycaproate, 6-hydroxycaproate, 6-hydroxycaprylate, and 6-hydroxypropionate.

**Claim 2 (Cancelled)**

**Claim 3 (Original)** The vehicle component of claim 1 wherein the vehicle component is made from a composite, the composite comprising a continuous matrix of the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin reinforced with a biodegradable fiber.

**Claim 4 (Original)** The vehicle occupant component of claim 3 wherein the biodegradable fiber comprises a continuous fiber or a discontinuous fiber.

**Claim 5 (Original)** The vehicle component of claim 3 wherein the biodegradable fiber comprises one of a plurality of continuous fibers and the continuous fibers are woven together.

**Claim 6 (Original)** The vehicle component of claim 3 wherein the biodegradable fiber comprises one of a plurality of discontinuous fibers and the discontinuous fibers are bonded together to form a web.

**Claim 7 (Original)** The vehicle component of claim 3 wherein the biodegradable fiber is a natural fiber or synthetic fiber.

**Claim 8 (Original)** The vehicle component of claim 3 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin is a poly(3-hydroxybutyrate).

**Claim 9 (Original)** The vehicle component of claim 3 wherein the biodegradable fiber is cotton.

**Claim 10 (Previously presented)** The vehicle component of claim 1 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin is formed as polyhydroxyalkanoate fibers.

**Claim 11 (Original)** The vehicle component of claim 10 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate fibers are woven or bonded together to form a biodegradable fabric.

**Claim 12 (Previously presented)** The vehicle component of claim 10 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin is selected from group consisting of poly(3-hydroxybutyrate-co-3-hydroxyvalerate) and polyhydroxyoctanoate.

**Claim 13 (Currently amended)** The vehicle component of claim 1 ~~wherein the biodegradable material is~~ comprising a biodegradable cellular material.

**Claim 14 (Currently amended)** The vehicle component of claim 1 ~~wherein the biodegradable material comprises~~ comprising a filler material.

**Claim 15 (Currently amended)** The vehicle component of claim 14 wherein the filler material imparts sound deadening properties to the ~~biodegradable material~~ vehicle component.

**Claim 16 (Cancelled)**

**Claim 17 (Currently amended)** A vehicle occupant protection apparatus comprising:

a reaction canister; and

an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device contained in the reaction canister;

wherein at least one of the reaction canister and the inflatable vehicle occupant protection device is biodegradable and comprises ~~a biodegradable~~

~~material, the biodegradable material formed as~~ at least one of a fiber, a continuous matrix of a composite, a filler, or a cellular material,

the fiber, the continuous matrix, the filler, or the ~~cell~~ cellular material consisting essentially of a polyhydroxyalkanoate resin, the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin being a homo-polymer or copolymer of hydroxyalkanoate monomer units selected from the group consisting of 3-hydroxybutyrate, 3-hydroxyvalerate, 3-hydroxyoctanoate, 4-hydroxybutyrate, 5 5-hydroxyvalerate, 5-hydroxycaproate, 6-hydroxycaproate, 6-hydroxycaprylate, and 6-hydroxypropionate.

**Claim 18 (Cancelled)**

**Claim 19 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 17 wherein the reaction canister is biodegradable and comprises a polyhydroxyalkanoate resin.

**Claim 20 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 19 wherein the reaction canister is made from a composite, the composite comprising a continuous matrix of the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin reinforced with a biodegradable fiber.

**Claim 21 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 20 wherein the biodegradable fiber comprises a continuous fiber or a discontinuous fiber.

**Claim 22 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 20 wherein the biodegradable fiber comprises one of a plurality of continuous fibers and the continuous fibers are woven together.

**Claim 23 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 20 wherein the biodegradable fiber comprises one of a plurality of discontinuous fibers and the discontinuous fibers are bonded together to form a web.

**Claim 24 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 20 wherein the biodegradable fiber is a natural fiber or synthetic fiber.

**Claim 25 (Original)** The vehicle occupant apparatus of claim 20 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin is a poly(3-hydroxybutyrate).

**Claim 26 (Original)** The vehicle occupant apparatus of claim 25 wherein the biodegradable fiber is cotton.

**Claim 27 (Original)** The vehicle occupant apparatus of claim 17 wherein the air bag is biodegradable and comprises polyhydroxyalkanoate resin.

**Claim 28 (Previously presented)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 27 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin is formed as polyhydroxyalkanoate fibers.

**Claim 29 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 28 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate fibers are woven or bonded together to form a biodegradable fabric.

**Claim 30 (Original)** The vehicle occupant apparatus of claim 29 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin is poly(3-hydroxybutyrate-co-3-hydroxyvalerate).

**Claim 31 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 29 wherein the biodegradable fabric has a Mullen burst strength of at least about 1500 psi and an elastic modulus of about 10,000 psi to about 400,000 psi.

**Claim 32 (Currently amended)** A vehicle occupant protection apparatus comprising a reaction canister wherein the reaction canister is biodegradable and comprises ~~a biodegradable material, the biodegradable material formed as~~ at least one of a fiber, a continuous matrix of a composite, a filler, or a cellular material, the fiber, the continuous matrix, the filler, or the cell cellular material consisting essentially of a polyhydroxyalkanoate resin, the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin being a homo-polymer or copolymer of hydroxyalkanoate monomer units selected from the group consisting of 3-hydroxybutyrate, 3-hydroxyvalerate, 3-hydroxyoctanoate, 4-hydroxybutyrate, 5 5-hydroxyvalerate, 5-hydroxycaproate, 6-hydroxycaproate, 6-hydroxycaprylate, and 6-hydroxypropionate.

**Claim 33 (Cancelled)**

**Claim 34 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 32 wherein the reaction canister further comprises a biodegradable fiber that reinforces the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin.

**Claim 35 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 32 wherein the reaction canister is made from a composite, the composite comprising a continuous matrix of the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin reinforced with a biodegradable fiber.

**Claim 36 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 34 wherein the biodegradable fiber comprises a continuous fiber or a discontinuous fiber.

**Claim 37 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 36 wherein the biodegradable fiber is one of a plurality of continuous fibers and the continuous fibers are woven together.

**Claim 38 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 36 wherein the biodegradable fiber is one of a plurality of discontinuous fibers and the discontinuous fibers are bonded together to form a web.

**Claim 39 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 34 wherein the biodegradable fiber is a natural fiber or a synthetic fiber.

**Claim 40 (Original)** The vehicle occupant apparatus of claim 34 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin is a poly(3-hydroxybutyrate).

**Claim 41 (Original)** The vehicle occupant apparatus of claim 40 wherein the biodegradable fiber is cotton.

**Claim 42 (Currently amended)** A vehicle occupant protection apparatus comprising a vehicle occupant protection device wherein the vehicle occupant protection device is biodegradable and ~~a biodegradable material, the biodegradable material formed as~~ at least one of a fiber, a continuous matrix of a composite, a filler, or a cellular material,

the fiber, the continuous matrix, the filler, or the ~~cell~~ cellular material consisting essentially of a polyhydroxyalkanoate resin, the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin being a homo-polymer or copolymer of hydroxyalkanoate monomer units selected from the group consisting of 3-hydroxybutyrate, 3-hydroxyvalerate, 3-hydroxyoctanoate, 4-hydroxybutyrate, 5 5-hydroxyvalerate, 5-hydroxycaproate, 6-hydroxycaproate, 6-hydroxycaprylate, and 6-hydroxypropionate.-

**Claim 43 (Currently amended)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 42 ~~wherein the~~ comprising polyhydroxyalkanoate resin is ~~formed as~~ polyhydroxyalkanoate fibers.



**Claim 44 (Original)** The vehicle occupant apparatus of claim 43 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate fibers are woven or bonded together to form a biodegradable fabric.

**Claim 45 (Original)** The vehicle occupant apparatus of claim 43 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate resin is poly(3-hydroxybutyrate-co-3-hydroxyvalerate).

**Claim 46 (Original)** The vehicle occupant protection apparatus of claim 43 wherein the biodegradable fabric has a Mullen burst strength of at least about 1500 psi and an elastic modulus of about 10,000 psi to about 400,000 psi.